

MACDONALD (A.)
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AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

OF

LOVE,

BEING TWO CHAPTERS FROM A WORK ENTITLED:

GIRLS WHO ANSWER "PERSONALS,"

presented by the author

BY

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WORKS
ON
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL PATHOLOGY*
BY AUTHOR.

ABNORMAL MAN, being essays on Education and Crime and related subjects, with digests of literature and a bibliography. 1893. Published by U. S. Government, Washington, D. C. 445 pages, 8°. 2nd edition, 1895.

CRIMINOLOGY, a psychological and scientific study of criminals; with introduction by Lombroso. Bibliography. (Second edition.) New York, 1894. Funk & Wagnalls, publishers. 416 pages, 12°. Price, \$2.00.

LE CRIMINEL-TYPE dans quelques formes graves de la criminalité Bibliographie de sexualité pathologique. (Troisième édition.) Un volume en 8°, illustrait de Portraits. Publié par A. Storck, Lyon, et G. Masson, Paris. 1895. 300 pages. Prix, 5 fr. *This work is not published in English.*

EDUCATION AND PATHO-SOCIAL STUDIES, including an investigation of the murderer "H." (Holmes). Published by the U. S. Government. 1896. 57 pages, 8°. Washington, D. C.

GIRLS WHO ANSWER PERSONALS, a sociologic and scientific study of young women, including letters of American and European girls in answer to personal advertisements; with a bibliography. Published by the author. 12°. 2nd edition, 266 pages. Washington, D. C., 1897. New introduction; three new chapters, entitled an "Experimental Study of Love," and "Intellectual Women and Matrimony"; new point of view. 66 pages added.

"Girls Who Answer Personals" (bound in paper, 50 cents; bound in cloth, \$1.25) will be sent, postage prepaid, on receipt of price, by the author, P. O. Lock-box 273, Washington, D. C., or may be ordered through book-sellers.

THE SEXUAL RELATIONS OF MAN AND WIFE, giving the latest and most trustworthy results of science and medicine; to be published by author in 1897. *This work is intended for professional persons only.*

* Social Pathology considers all classes of individuals who from mental, moral, physical, or sociological characteristics or defects are out of harmony with their environment.

CHAPTER IV.

AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF LOVE.

We will now take up a few cases as an experimental study of love, employing, as far as possible, the natural-history method. The difficulties and intricacies of such an investigation will be evident. We shall give a description of those cases only that have chanced to come within our own knowledge, or have been told us directly by the persons themselves.

CASES B. AND C.

B. was an ambitious and educated young man, about 21 years of age. One day, hearing his sister and other young ladies speak very highly of a certain young woman, Miss C., he had a desire to meet her, but let no one know it. He became acquainted at a church social, but did not talk with her long, for on first sight he had a strong inclination towards her, and was afraid she might suspect it. He began to idealize her, and his feeling became so intense that he lost in weight, taking only toast and tea as a diet. His family thought him unwell, not having the least suspicion of the real cause. It is generally true that during high tension of feeling the desire for food lessens, perhaps because the system under nervous strain is much limited in its power of digestion and assimilation.

B. soon became well enough acquainted with Miss C. to invite her to take a carriage ride. He had in no way manifested any feeling towards her, but had made up his mind that he would do so on this prospective ride. Although it



was only two days before the time, he could not wait, and so called upon Miss C. at her home. A gentleman had been paying attention to her for some time, and it was reported that they were engaged. After much difficulty in directing the conversation, he asked her if it was true that she was engaged. She said she was not. Then he made known his feeling to her. Of course, she was much surprised; cancelled the ride, and forbade him coming to see her. Although he was very much hurt, he was nevertheless glad he had confessed to her the truth, and felt relieved. He wrote plaintive and beseeching letters to her, which were occasionally answered. She finally said that she could not find "one drop of love" for him in her heart.

B. was not a frivolous man, but was regarded as a serious and exemplary person. He was accustomed to ladies' society, and was not specially attentive to any particular one. He could not explain, when asked, why he had this feeling. Miss C. was not handsome nor specially prepossessing, but was a little uncouth in manner; she had received a moderate education. The social position of the two was about equal; the young woman's parents were fairly well-to-do. There was no reason to believe but that B. and C. were well adapted to each other, and had B. been less aggressive in his attentions, he might have won C. It seems to be instinctive in young women to reject the impetuous lover, without the least consideration of his character, ability, and fitness.

B. illustrates impetuous love, that at the time has little reason and loses common sense. He was conscious of these facts all the time, but his impulses and desires were too strong.

CASES D. AND E.

Miss D. was a university student, about 25 years of age, handsome, prepossessing, a good dancer; a woman of society when she chose to be, and at the same time of the highest intellectual caliber. She was the furthest from seeking men, yet she was not shy of them; she liked their company. She was neat and stylish in her appearance, setting an excellent example for university women, who seem to become careless in their dress. Her university training, fortunately, had not developed any masculinity, or made her unnatural or unconventional in her behavior towards men. Masculinity in woman is probably independent of education, although it might be increased along with the general development of the person in a university course. A certain professor, with much experience as an instructor of women, once remarked that, after all, the best students were the *womanly* women, and not those with masculine proclivities.

E. was a student in the same university with D. He often called on D., and had many and long discussions. He had never felt or shown any emotional element in this acquaintance until he had known D. very well. He was in D.'s room one afternoon discussing, as usual, many things. There she sat, doing a little handiwork as a change and recreation from study. She was as unassuming and as unostentatious as the most sweet and gentle woman could be, and at the same time was the brightest of all the university girls; she was then preparing herself for her Doctorate in Philosophy. If there is such a thing as unconscious hypnotism on the part of the operator, it certainly existed here; for at this moment E. could not resist the thought, which had been latent in him

for some time, that there, in his very presence, was an ideal future companion. This feeling so possessed him that, before he left the room, he made it known to D. She was somewhat surprised that he felt towards her in more than an intellectual way. She, however, was very considerate, and promised she would think the matter over seriously. After two or three days, she told E. that she could not fulfil his hopes; that she had the highest regard for him, but that she never would marry any man.

This experience cost E. much in nervous strain, and he felt the disappointment very keenly. Miss D. was kind to him, and allowed him to visit her just the same. There may have been other influences that affected Miss D., although they might not have been in her mind at the time. Like most university students, E. was poor and had little visible means of support; some of his clothes were threadbare. These so-called superficial things affect women unconsciously, whether they admit it or not. Common sense teaches that practical matters of this nature deserve a little consideration. D. herself had only moderate means.

There was also a little uncouthness about E., probably resulting from his long-enforced economy in life. Such a mode of life tends to make one too serious in appearance, and often in reality. This feeling can become so extreme in love affairs as to be morbid, and this sometimes results in most terrible crimes in persons with morally weak and impetuous characters. There should be a good natured disposition on both sides, especially when the course of love does not run smooth. Sometimes a woman wishes she could love the man who loves her, although she feels it is impossible to do it.

CASES F. AND G.

Miss F. and Mr. G. had met, and corresponded occasionally; there was not the least sentiment in their letters; there was only a mutual interest in certain questions they often discussed, but upon which they did not always agree. They met, finally, at a summer resort among the mountains, where opportunity was afforded them to become better acquainted. They were walking together almost every day and were generally engaged in some discussion, which was pleasantly interrupted now and then by expressions of admiration for the beautiful scenery. The transition from a polemical conversation to stooping down and drinking from a gurgling spring, although sudden, was a refreshing digression. For several days F. and G. continued their walks, finding more points of disagreement the longer they were together, until G. made up his mind that it would be best to say good-bye. After a few weeks, G. returned and called on Miss F. To his surprise, she seemed to be as willing to climb the mountains as ever; in fact, a change had taken place in Miss F.; she was not disposed to insist so much on a point or to become quarrelsome as she had in the past. She seemed to have much strong feeling for G., which proved to be contagious. They did not care whether they agreed or disagreed; emotion and feeling had become much more powerful than reason and polemics; they were given over to mutual monopolization; they were in love. Their walks continued, but at last there was a reaction. Miss F., one day, for some unknown reason, turned on G. and walked away; G. followed, and pleaded with her not to leave him, but she walked straight on towards her home. They proceeded in single file. Coming to a barb-wire fence

(they had, in their walks, encountered many before), G. lifted the lower wire up, and, after some hesitation, F. stooped down and passed under. It was a question whether F would lift the wire for G.; she did, but in an indifferent manner, and not sufficiently high, so that the back of his coat was caught and torn. This little incident was the turning point of renewed affection (it was a new coat, that she had admired); she relented and repented, and again feeling grew intense between them.

Here is illustrated how dependent the conditions of friendship and love are on what may be called *spacial propinquity*. Leisure time, also, is of great incidental importance. In the country, among the fields, hills, and mountains, the naturalness of the surroundings, and the absence of modern artificiality, give a directness to the conversation which, under other conditions (as at a reception or in a parlor), might not be natural. This propinqual feeling is often felt on the ocean steamer. The person opposite you, or at your side, whose name you may not know, talks familiarly about his or her home, family, or friends. It seems to take only a short time to become well acquainted, and when you meet again you feel as if you had known each other all your life. The absence of ulteriorousness in such acquaintances (for you know nothing about the people, as a rule) is one of the most charming features.

CASES H. AND K

Miss H. had been acquainted with Mr. K. for about a year; they had corresponded a few times. She had invited him to call, should he chance to be near her summer home. He wrote her a letter about his vacation plans. At the close of her letter, in answer to his, was the following:

I could write you a conventional letter, but it's too hot.

May you have a vacation after your own heart and "peach blossoms" galore.

In his next letter, he wrote that possibly he might be near her neighborhood, and in that event would call. He remarked, also, that he did not quite comprehend just what she meant by "peach blossoms." Her letter in answer was :

MY DEAR MR. K. :

I am glad to hear you are so near such a good place as I call "Home." It's the best hospital after all, and "mother" about the best nurse (?). Now that "school of one" might become a "school of two," but satisfactory pupils are hard to find. As to "peach blossoms"—why—pretty girls—don't you like to find them wherever you stop, or is there "only one girl in the world for you"? The only inducement I can offer you here is that we will skip civilization and seek a spot—the most fascinating I know—near to Nature's heart. Let me know when you are coming, but don't hurry away from your mother, for she's the best girl you'll find.

Mr. K. came and spent a short time at her home. It was a "school of two," as the pupil seemed to be satisfactory. They went sailing, rowing, walking, and riding, and in those few days became much better acquainted than they could in a year of city life. Mr. K., some time previously, had met Miss H. in the company of another gentleman. K. noticed, during the conversation at that time, that Miss H. incidentally brushed a little speck of lint off of the gentleman's coat. He had not forgotten this circumstance, and mentioned it in a joking manner to Miss H. ; but from her demeanor he concluded that it was not so amusing to her. She finally told him that she had been corresponding with this gentleman daily for nearly a year ; that she loved him and he loved her. But she had learned that he had been di-

forced and unfortunately it had got into the newspapers; and, whether just or not, his character and his treatment of his wife were described in very uncomplimentary terms. H. had finally determined that, though she truly loved him, she could not take the chances of marrying him. She dreaded to write and tell him, "it would hurt him so;" she did not know what to do, she was "frantic." Mr. K. hardly knew what to say; he had learned to think a good deal of Miss H. A previous experience with another woman enabled him better to sympathize with her. He said he would help her in any way he could, and that, if she cared to, she could make him a sort of escape-valve for her feeling; that he would not misunderstand her. After taking his departure, he wrote as comforting letters as he could, promising to come and see her again. He received the following letter from her:

MY DEAR FRIEND :

Your letter is the most comforting thing I've had for days. I get no letters now, and I read yours over and over again. I am glad you are coming, for that will be another ray of comfort. When I think of the love I had for him these words come to me, "You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will, but the scent of the roses will hang round it still." Yet with all the memory of what was once so sweet I would not bring it back. But I must not weary you with this. Don't wonder at anything I write, for I have a thousand feelings in a day. I only wish there was more here to keep my mind busy. How I envy you in —; that country holds a place in my heart next to the dear old lake. Your Sunday at the seashore, how delightful it must have been! Now tell me when you are coming. I expect, now, to leave for a two or three days' visit. I wish you could come the last of this week and stay till I go. If not, come the last of next week. Write soon. You don't know how lonely I am. Good-bye.

This rather sudden transition of feeling may perhaps be explained in this way. Miss H. was in a love mood; yet she

must give up the man she loves; but what could she do after that? She must have some sort of escape for her feeling. It is true, she was changeable in her moods, yet she was sincere, as the letter which follows will show:

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Your welcome letter found me in so much better spirits than when I wrote last that I feel quite guilty for having told you my troubles. But you are so gentle and sympathetic that I couldn't help it! It is so sweet to be thought of and wished for, and know some one cares for you, that I have become quite a baby. Let me tell you that we sit on the porch every evening until late, watching the shooting stars, etc., and though I enjoy it very much, I can't help thinking how much nicer it would be if you were here; but I know you are having a delightful time in —, and a much better one than you could here. Next Tuesday night Mamma and I go to — for two or three days. It's such a stupid place, can't you write me there—just a wee letter? We shall expect you here the last of the week, and if you are as frivolous as ever, what *shall* I do with you? Surely, I will have to *reform* you or turn you over to one of my friends—which do you prefer? Good-bye.

K. wrote her as helpful letters as he could, and received the following response:

MY DEAR FRIEND:

It was good of you to have a letter at both ends of the journey yesterday. Letters are a weak point with me. I have just written a letter and torn it up for fear of being misunderstood. When you get this you may write me at — what your plans are. I am in a tempest of feeling and I can't write. Have been reading "Jane Eyre" again and it has used me up, this hot weather assisting.

I hope you'll not change your mind about coming back.

We go for a drive this morning. Jeannie is playing a very bewitching piece on the piano, and I feel like it!

Write me freely, you have not lately.

Forget my faults, but don't forget me. In despair, good-bye.

She seemed now to long for his letters; this he had not expected. She is transferring her feeling to him. She is greatly disappointed in not receiving a letter. She writes thus :

I am going to the office now, and hope there will be a little letter for me. It is lonesome without you. I think of you most of the time. When I was reading in — the other day, I thought of you many times. I want you to feel you can come to me with anything and everything. Keep my soul and I will keep yours. Tell me all you feel. I am going now. Good-by, dear.

No letter here !

K. immediately wrote, indicating to her that she could utilize him in the way she found the most relief. Her answer was :

MY DEAR FRIEND :

We returned this noon to find your letters waiting. You are my only comfort now. I hardly expect you to get this at —, but if you do, remember I am looking for you, and the sooner you get here the better. It is not so very cool here, but we have no mosquitoes, and I promise you some walks in the country. You can do whatever you like best. Did you get the crazy letter I sent to the — ? Well, you are a kind of escape-valve for my various moods : you will not judge me harshly, for you know something about it. A friend in need is a friend indeed. You are both. Believe me, gratefully yours.

Miss H. seemed to have what might be called spasmodic love ; she was not designing, but spontaneous in her moods. In the following interesting letter she explains herself to K. :

It has been said, " Never write a love-letter at night : " you may say more than you mean the next morning. Well, your letter surprised me. I thought you were writing me out of sympathy alone. I may be very stupid, but I never believe that people care for me. I believe very little of what people *say* to me or write, but their *manner* toward me tells much more. I had a strange, a thrilling experience this

summer. It showed me that there was a love in my heart that only one man in the world had ever touched. I have loved him, I have worshipped him ever since I was old enough to put my tiny hand in his boyish clasp. We had not seen each other since we were children, and each had forgotten how he loved the other, but such love *never dies*. We met again as man and woman, but our love can never be satisfied—it is forbidden by all the laws of man and nature. I dare not write more about it, but while I suffer not from the memory of it, I have always that ideal before me—never satisfied. I sometimes wish I could cry myself to sleep in his arms, and never waken again. I am a strange mixture of passion and passiveness. I write these words with perfect indifference, as though they concerned another. There is another I love with a warm, romantic love—he is fast passing from boyhood to manhood—he is brimful of sentiment—outwardly we are friends, but in our hearts lovers. He writes freely, though he knows it is but the love of the warmest and truest friendship which I have given him. These two—the real and the ideal—are ever before me. I sometimes question if I ought to show any feeling at all, to allow any to be shown me. Then the woman's "love of being loved" becomes so strong—I yield. Strange but true, I often love the *love* more than the lover. That becomes misleading, and where am I?

The grief of my life has been that I had no brother—I love boys—I feel so lonely when I see brothers and sisters happy and affectionate. I, naturally affectionate, have no one to caress—so for years my feelings were bottled up. Then, when I did "let myself go," it was but to waste the richness and sweetness of first love on one long past the tender age of first experiences. My passion spent itself, because time showed the grounds of true love were lacking. Do you wonder I have a tone of sadness in this memory? It is like tearing the bloom from the peach, or crushing the fragrance from the rose. Will the flower bloom again?

These are some of my secrets. They have never escaped me before. You can guess how much I trust you. You do not know what a blessing you have been to me. As a friend, I love you dearly. Write me all that is in your heart, and I will do the same whenever I can. When you come I think I will let you read a poem which means much to me. I am afraid this letter won't satisfy you, but it's *honest*. I'm sad to-day.

Write me as soon as you get this. Your letter did not make me sad. I'm glad you wrote as you did.

K. answered her letter as usual. In the following letter she seems to waver in her feelings, not knowing what to write :

MY DEAR FRIEND :

Your good kind letter came this morning. I have been in —— to-day; just returned. Will tell you all when I see you, but I can't write now. I am *dazed*. Excuse this scrap of a letter. But believe me, faithfully yours.

She begins the next letter sweetly enough, but proceeds to give K. a warning, which we shall see later on was not without foundation :

MY DEAR :

You will not find that "sweet letter" waiting for you in ——, for the last one I sent you was short and somewhat *tart*. You are too good to me. You will spoil me.

I had a relapse Friday—no joking—and this morning I'm in a most capricious mood. Are you sure you want to see me? Beware! I wonder how it will affect me to see you again. It is like reading a novel for the first time.

Your letters Saturday night and this morning are *dear*, but I fear you are "wasting your sweetness on the desert air." I'm not worth it. I'm only a mountain pink that grows in out-of-the-way places—hard to reach—not easily taken from its hiding-place.

Well, I shall be glad to see you again, only be prepared for anything—even for a snow-storm. Good-bye.

K. came to see her for a day or so, and after departing wrote her as usual, encouraging her to take her mind off the whole matter by studying and preparing herself for some position. She answers :

Your letter came this morning. The influence of your presence is still with me. I seem to be getting out of the quicksands. How I cling to *you* and wrap myself up in you. I am a kind of mental

chameleon. Well, I put in three hours yesterday towards that \$1,000 position. I have been thinking of you all day. You are growing very dear. Good-bye.

Miss H. once remarked to K. that, like a kitten, she was docile, but sometimes scratched, as will be evident in the next letter. It seems that she and K. had gone to the city to spend the day, and had lost the last train back to her country home. K. did not know just what was best to do under the circumstances. They discussed the matter, but there was not much time, as it was getting late. It was finally decided that K. should go to the best hotel, and explain the situation to the clerk, and have him assign Miss H. a room. This was done. The next day Miss H. thought her mother might worry, and so telegraphed her to come to the city and do some shopping instead of waiting for another day for which they had planned. K. went with H. to meet her mother. He could see that something was wrong; the mother seemed uneasy. He excused himself as politely as he could, and bade them good-bye. As the mother was very rigid in her ideas as to what she considered proper, she exaggerated the circumstance, imagining all sorts of things that never happened. This seemed to furnish her daughter a cue, if not an excuse, for writing the following letter, in which she shows her capricious nature, of which she so truthfully warned K. in one her previous epistles:

Your letters have been duly received, also the flowers, for which I thank you. Now, I am going to tell you how I feel, just as honestly as I always have, and as you have wanted me to. After thinking the whole matter over, I must say I cannot approve of the course you took at —. It was very injudicious under all the circumstances. Mother was decidedly displeased, and will never get over her feeling towards you. I did not think it right at all. I could not think of meeting you for a moment. I am too proud to be anything but inde-

pendent wherever I go. I do not misunderstand you, but I am as firm as a rock on that. I have been through enough! Henceforth I shall keep to my work. I shall have no time for anything else. I want neither help nor sympathy or love now; I simply wish to be left alone to work out my own salvation. I shall think of you as a friend I can trust, as I have in the past: you can still trust me. But as it is a woman's privilege to be left to herself, if she so chooses, I ask that you respect it. Remember, that I have written my honest feelings. I know you will think me changeable. I do not care; think anything but that I am not honest; my better self is my best and safest guide. Good-bye.

Being aware of the changeableness of H., K. wrote her a kind letter, taking no notice of the unpleasant things said. He received the following reply:

Your letters came yesterday. Please don't make me tell you again that I don't wish to see you, and that I meant what I said when I first wrote that I simply wished to be left alone! If I "scratch," it was not till I changed my opinion of you: that is, you did not act as I should suppose a gentleman would who paid careful attention to the proprieties of life, if only for sake of appearances. I am willing to admit I was to blame in not insisting upon it, but you think you did exactly the right thing. Now, I have spoken very plainly. You knew what you had criticised in the past; why not help me avoid it again? I made an exception of you. I will never do it for any man again. Please take this just as I mean it, and, remember, I cannot be coaxed again. Nothing you could say would change me, so please don't write. I leave soon, and I want to feel that you will respect my wishes. Good-bye.

K. was not very obedient, and wrote H. this letter:

Your unjust letters have been duly received. I am very sorry your good mother feels as she does; she is very sincere, I know, but sincerity may have poor judgment as to what is best to do in unforeseen circumstances.

I have only friendship to return you for your unjust letters. Good-bye.

The next day K. received this letter:

MY DEAR FRIEND:

Can only write a line, as we have a house full of company, and I have been sick with the grippe and am wretched yet. My plans are very uncertain as yet, but I cannot meet you: that is, I do not wish to. It is my fault partly, I know just where, and if I seem unjust, I'm sorry. I can't change my opinion on certain things. You do not understand me. Well, good-bye.

The emotional nature of H. seems to have a hysterical element; her moods were more permanent than those of Miss F. Miss H. appeared to like giving away to her feelings; then she would repent afterwards. How many previous experiences of this kind she may have had is not known.

Miss H. was a woman of intellectual tastes, prepossessing, and refined in manners. She often said she wished she had a brother, doubtless thinking that it would save her from experiences like the above.

As Miss H. was a woman full of feeling and sentiment, a few remarks as to modes of its manifestation may not be out of place.

The expression of sentiment and emotion in provincial districts is somewhat rustic in form. It is not always confined to words, even with the most prudent in metropolitan communities. It may be said, in general, that those acts of young women and men which might be called "familiar" are the more common and the more innocent in proportion to the provincial character of the persons and surroundings. Sentimental practices are not a great evil, because they probably serve as a substitute or compensation for more serious acts. Such manifestations as pressing the hand, stroking the forehead, smoothing the hair, etc., etc.; or en-

circling the waist with the arm, or letting the shoulders touch, etc., etc.; or in a more boisterous form of hugging, cheek-rubbing, kissing, caressing, etc., etc., may, with similar phenomena, be classed under the head of *peripheral sentiment*.

Generally speaking, such methods of expressing sentiment are not advisable, however æsthetical or unæsthetical they may be considered. They can sometimes be dangerous, when they give rise to passion, especially in the case of those persons whose characters are not above suspicion.

The manner of sentimental expression between two lovers depends much on their taste and education. There is no more common way in which young engaged or recently married people show their vulgarity and bad breeding than by giving physical expression to their feelings in the presence of others. As a rule, every woman knows whether she is in love or not. There is even what might be called a *love look*. When a woman feels willing to be a man's life-companion, and has given herself over to him, she acts towards him and looks at him in a peculiar but natural way; it is the sweetness and smile in the look enshrined with absolute confidence in him; this is one of the loftiest things in human nature; it puts the man on his highest honor. True love between man and woman brings out their noblest characteristics.

CHAPTER V.

A WALT WHITMAN GIRL.

As a continuation of the experimental study of love, we will give more at length a single case, which we shall call Miss L. From the title of this chapter it might be inferred by some that Miss L. was a woman of questionable character, but such an inference would be entirely misleading. Miss L. represents a type of those modern women who believe in many of the ideas of Walt Whitman, but who do not for this reason accept *all* of his conclusions. These women are usually of high intellectual and moral character and are outspoken in manner; they sometimes talk indiscreetly on subjects of delicate nature, and so are frequently misunderstood.*

CASE OF MISS L. AND MR. N.

Miss L. was a young woman very independent by nature. She had always had her own way at home; her parents gave her many privileges; she often said she was a "spoilt child." She had spent much time in different educational institutions; her training was broad and varied. After graduating from college, she pursued advanced studies in different universities. She was not afflicted with what may be called intellectual college provincialism, which is often the result of remaining too long in the same institution.

* See pages 117-118.

Experience had revealed to her how impractical were many things taught her, and how little some of the professors knew, especially those who, so to speak, tried to impress others with their superior knowledge. She saw clearly, but did not recognize its necessity, that most university lectures were second-hand knowledge, consisting of a wise selection and combination of the results and opinions of original investigators. She especially disliked that platitudinous species of imitation, common in women's colleges, which arises from too much faithfulness and docility in accepting the opinions of teachers based on their own assertions. Miss L., with her critical nature, was sure to see all the defects in college and university education; she therefore underestimated many of the advantages.

Miss L. gradually became dissatisfied with almost everything, even life itself. She had aimed at a literary career, and had written some, but was discontented either from lack of encouragement from others or because her productions had not been received as favorably as she had expected. She felt that her life was somewhat aimless, and seemed disposed to let things drift along, amusing herself as best she could. Miss L. was not a nervous woman, as one might think; her instability was due to her dissatisfaction with the world in general, and especially with men. She was not a man-hater by any means, but still she considered men a selfish lot, who paid attention to women under one guise or another, but in reality sought merely their own comfort and pleasure. Yet Miss L. liked the intellectual company of men; she was, however, very sarcastic, and discouraged men's attentions. She was probably often misunderstood, because her sarcastic turns were very temporary and seemed to be a whimsical way of playing with men, for, as will

be seen in her letters, she soon regrets and repents of many of her ingenuous flings.

Mr. N. was also a university student. His training had been quite different from Miss L.'s. He was more interested in scientific subjects. Miss L., who possessed an artistic sense, was quick to perceive the defects of N., due to his lack of appreciation of many artistic things that interested her.

Mr. N. had met Miss L. early in her college course. He had not seen her for many years, and had heard nothing of her until he received a letter from her asking advice as to a course of study for a young man in whose education she was interested. Mr. N. had not forgotten Miss L.; was very glad to hear from her, and wrote that he would assist the young man all he could. He also inquired of Miss L. about herself, what she was doing, etc.

Miss L. wrote the following letter in reply:

MY DEAR MR. N.:

I am pleased that you take a kindly interest in Mr. ——. I think that the quality of his brain is fine and his nature is a strong one. Added to this is an ideal that aims to do the best work possible, and, as our "scholastic" friends would learnedly ejaculate, his educational training so far has been excellent. I wish that he might go *at once* to the university.

You ask me what I am doing. Well, as I do not belong to the genus of "students" of which you speak, I am relieved from making the stupid reply, "Nothing!"

I am, sincerely yours.

As Mr. N. desired to continue the correspondence, he wrote again to Miss L., touching upon the idea of "doing nothing." He ventured to suggest some things that might be done. She answered:

MY DEAR MR. N. :

My dear pedagogue with Sunday-school instincts, possibly if I were not so hardened a sinner, your sympathy and patronizing offer of assistance in work would more fully be appreciated. But I am a hopeless barbarian, utterly weary of *university* life, so that your profound veneration arouses no responsive chord in my erratic soul. I am content simply to vegetate. Do not waste energy in trying to "educate" me; for, of all dead things, what is deader than dead enthusiasm? Your method of *killing time* (life simply) happens to be *study*. Well, there are other ways, and *who* shall say which is the most valuable? "As if whether a man serve God or his own whim much matters, and in the end, to any one but him." As for myself, I have no more veneration for the scholar than for the man who lies in the ditch; the points of view simply are different. For me, there are no *absolute values*. The old Persian poet epitomized it all in these words: "Do you know where you go after death? Give me some wine and go where you please." One has got to get through life in some way; let him choose his own way, whether it be by the road of so-called virtue, or vice, whichever his particular idiosyncrasy chooses. It is all a huge joke, anyway, and books do not contain all. What are they, anyway, but *records of living*? When I see a scholar—and the creature is omnipresent—looking down from his imaginative pedestal, the words of wise old Shakespeare come to my mind,—“There are more things in heaven and earth than your philosophy has dreamed of!” And the scholarly or scientific investigation that takes things out of their settings in order to draw up schemes of conclusions has not gone very far beyond philosophical abstraction and theological dogma.

To repeat, it is all killing time—one *must* do something.

Pardon me for inflicting this long letter upon you; it was not my intention to impose upon your kindness at such great length. Sincerely yours.

N. replied to this letter, saying that he did not have such great reverence for professors as she supposed. The university, in a sense, was in another world. It still clung to remnants of its old cloister nature.

In the next letter, Miss L. reveals a new phase in her

character. She seems to hold *theoretically* some of the opinions of Walt Whitman, and illustrates a class which, for want of a better term, we may call the Walt Whitman woman. The general idea that women are more extreme in the development of their thoughts than men is here illustrated. This is probably due to their more intense idealism and earnestness.

MY DEAR MR. N. :

Well, I am always glad to know an out and out *heathen*. We often meet people who have thrown up traditions to a certain extent, but they usually retain one particular *pet* one, which they are carefully nursing. I do not quite see how an individual can *live*—that is, really *live*—in this world and have a “conviction” in regard to anything. Emerson said a fairly good thing when he remarked that “we do what we *must* and call it by the best names we can.” Well, I have come to the point of asking absolutely nothing from people if they don’t please me. I simply (if possible) keep away from them. If an individual is interesting to me, I can forgive anything, save *meanness*. And those who enjoy the little round of a respectable hedged-in existence, let them *enjoy* it! As long as they don’t invite me within the enclosure, all right. But one of the most curious things to me is the way in which people strive to conceal their real feelings and give the lie to their organisms. Why shouldn’t we accept ourselves as we are instead of clothing ourselves in word-illusions that make the truth (relative, of course) so hard to get at? Few people are brave enough to simply face themselves. I suppose that you are familiar with the following of sturdy Walt Whitman, but it bears repetition: “I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained. I stand and look at them long and long. They do not *sweat and whine* about their condition. They do not lie awake in the dark and *weep for their sins*. They do not make me sick discussing *their duty to God*. Not one is dissatisfied. Not one is demented with the mania of owning things. Not one *kneels to another*, nor to his kind *that lived thousands of years ago*. Not one is *respectable* or unhappy over the whole earth.” One of the most disagreeable words to me in the whole English language is that life-killer, “duty.”

Take the one subject, for instance, of sexual freedom (an important one, by the way): it is going to take a long time before woman can feel in a sane, natural way in regard to it, and then to be honest in acknowledging what her nature feels. I think one of the most belittling things to a woman's sense of individuality is the passive attitude that she is expected to assume. What else can she be, living a lie for generations? If the lie were interesting, then it might be forgiven, but it is so wearisome. One would naturally expect more from the college woman, but I have known so many—oh, so many—of them that were mere book-receptacles that I have sometimes thought that the household drudge, with eleven youngsters to toil for, really knew more about life as it is than her learned sister. I, for my part, have no respect for the woman—or, for that matter, man either (but the latter are not troubled that way), who prides herself upon her *virgin purity* (simply ignorance and an half-atrophied organism, to my thinking).

Again, it is difficult for women to take an impartial, scientific view of things. One is always coming up against their cultivated modesty and supposed fineness of nature and their preconceived notions. Perhaps it is not surprising that women for the present should put so much faith in the college and university. That they, as a rule, do not know what to do with the stuff they put into their brains there, and carry it about as a dead weight, is, I think, a fact. Perhaps, as the habit gets older, they will understand more fully the meaning of so-called learning, and recognize that books are merely, at the most, records of living, and that books were made for man, and not man for books.

Can you pardon the garrulity that I have inflicted upon you? I have written as incoherently as the impulse dictated. Sincerely yours.

By the way, the *slippery ground* and the ragged edges, etc., are perhaps the most interesting things in life. At least, in the joy they give, for the time being they suffice, and give their own solution. Yes, 'tis the "time of life" that most successfully defines itself.

Mr. N. in his answers to Miss L.'s letters generally referred only to questions that she had introduced. He wrote rather briefly, because L. seemed so changeable. In fact, if he did not insist on a point very much, she would be more liable to

agree with him. She sometimes imagined him as, or falsely accused him of, assuming a superior air or manifesting a dictatorial spirit, and this feeling aroused opposition in her.

In the following letter L. philosophizes about life and its uselessness :

MY DEAR MR. N. :

The idea that the world is "hypercritical" and "degenerating" finds a responsive echo in my soul. The artificialities of life have leaped into supreme importance, and it is only when we dash up against one of the few primitive facts of existence that we fully realize the meanness, the littleness, of our daily living. It certainly seems to me at times simply a grotesque little farce, touched up here and there by tragic gleams. But again, from another point of view, life often appeals to one as a thing of interest, as a matter of *experience* it certainly is. When one can sum up its experiences and appraise them either artistically or scientifically, one feels, to a limited extent, master of the situation. And one realizes that with a subtly developed nature, that *suffering* cannot be escaped. And what means a hog-like, unemotional existence? A lethargic content and comfort is not *life*. I, for one, am willing to take the consequences, the risks of living. God save me from simply existing. I want nothing of repentances and expiations. Let *nature* have its fling! And let us take what comes. The little tame respectabilities of life, I want them not. But I have learned, in knocking about the world, to keep my mouth shut—that is, on general principles. One learns in time to listen to and see all things with non-committal composure, and the mania for proselyting dies a natural death. When one realizes the hopelessness of fixed ideas, I fancy that the one sane thing to do is to make the effort to get all one can out of the hoax. But, after all, the spectacle of the poor, little human struggling to permanently fix his darling fiction of gods is pathetic. As Zola says, "It is the instinctive hankering after the lie which creates human credulity." And Olive Schreiner voices it in these words: "So age succeeds age, and dream succeeds dream, and of the joy of the dreamer no man knoweth but he who dreameth. Our fathers had their dream: we have ours: the generation that follows will have its own. Without dreams and phantoms man cannot

exist." But I sometimes think that the race will come to take life on its own basis; that, of course, is the hope of science; but when, when? I sometimes fancy that running about through our organisms are the ghosts of our traditions, and that they go on with their weird dances when we are quite unconscious of their presence. No, I have no faith, or very little, for any pretty schemes for the bettering of life, and yet what beautiful possibilities we sometimes think we discern. And the vision of a strong, full, healthful, intellectual, and *emotional* life is alluring, but what do we know of it? But why do I go on rambling in this futile fashion? Well, as for myself, at the present moment I would like to be wandering under sunny skies, away from the bleak, the cold, and the grim. Are you ready to ejaculate, "How feminine!" Sincerely yours.

N. wrote L. plainly, giving his opinion as to the freedom of woman. L. refers to this, and then continues to reason about life.

MY DEAR MR. N.:

Your fear of "shocking" me amuses me just a little. I am not sure but that I should enjoy the sensation of being shocked; it certainly would be novel, and I am always looking for that. Again, I am a little bit amused that you should portray yourself a monster of *radicalism* because you endorse "freedom" for women. Whereas your remarks strike me as mild, probably for the reason that I have so long considered women as *individuals*, entitled to freedom, that the idea has become a part of me. What pertains simply to one's self, one, of course, can regulate in accordance with his own ideas, nor do I think it necessary for him to impart to his neighbor a knowledge of his actions. But life is a complicated matter, and the relations of living so many, that, at present at least, independent action is almost an impossibility. One cannot brutally carry out his ideas when they bring suffering. Remember that I say nothing of *duty*; that is a term that I intentionally ignore; but *suffering* one cannot ignore, and here is just the point where I differ with you.

If the element of suffering could be eliminated, then amusing it might be. But suffering of all kinds is omnipresent, and the more subtly developed the nature the more susceptible to pain is it. It

seems to me that a more intricate consciousness goes with a higher evolution. But the man-nature does not recognize that as does the woman-nature. Men are obtuse, in a sense (not literally do I mean this). I know whereof I speak. I have known many men—of the more developed type—and constantly am I becoming more convinced of the fact of how very little of the *woman-nature* do they comprehend. I am perfectly conscious, too, that men, in a half-uncomprehending way, pity women for the possession of what they think feminine attributes; but, in my opinion, in the evolution of men and women, the advantages have not been entirely on one side. I think the developed imagination and subtlety of the woman-nature are extremely interesting, and it is the lack of these in the man-nature that makes a broadly comprehensive and sympathetic relation between a man and woman so difficult. It is one of my fancies that, in nature, men need to be somewhat womanized, and women somewhat manized, before a finer relation can exist between the two. But the subject is such an illimitable one that one despairs of giving even a slight glimpse in writing. The emotions are entitled to development quite as much as the intellect (of course I use these terms for convenience, not meaning tho' to take the liberty of dissecting the organism), and I repeat, the woman-nature is infinitely more developed here than the man's. Oftentimes with a man, as far as women are concerned, it is *novelty* he is seeking, not congeniality of relation. I care not in how many women he finds congeniality—that is not the point—but when it is merely something *new*, well, what's the use of speaking of it? Things are as they are, and a woman knows or learns in time to expect little from men—simply to take them as they are—and has to decide whether, taking all things into consideration, it is worth while to take what there is in the imperfect relation that exists between a man and a woman, and, in addition to this, is also the fact that is true of everything in life, that what one can get one does not want; reality in our grasp fades into meaninglessness. Scientific instinct is totally inadequate; 'tis only a comprehending sympathy that will throw light upon this subject. Yes, the "Heavenly Twins" idiocy nauseates one. I profoundly pity the woman who refuses to know life. I WOULD KNOW it if it meant absolute emotional disintegration. Of course it is sad—unfortunate, perhaps, I had better say—that one exhausts emotions: but if it has to be, let it be. It is better to *really live* even for a moment than to simply go on *existing* indefinitely.

I would like to ask you a question. It is this: How does the *artistic* side of literature appeal to you? Are you susceptible to its charm? I ask this because I strongly think that, in addition to *knowing* things, there is the beautiful side, that is just as potent. The *glowing*, the *sensuous*, the *beautiful* in life, expressed with the subtle, elusive charm that music has, in the fine enthusiasm of poetry, and in the loveliness of nature. These are oftentimes only *felt*, not to be defined. Renan so finely said, you know, that "*religion* was a sigh from the heart of man." I would prefer to substitute *emotion* where Renan uses religion, for there are *yearnings* within the human soul, and momentary glimpses of the beautiful, that are sweet and fine. Of course there is nothing to adequately satisfy these yearnings. Ah, yes, one knows that he has only to live to find that fact out. One can fix up in one's mind a most ideal existence, but I'm not sure but that after he got the pretty scheme fixed he would find it unutterably stupid. I believe that it is the *uncertain* in life that appeals to me. I am a weary spectator of this scene called *life*.

After trying your patience so long by prattling on in this fashion, I will, woman-like, beseech forgiveness, vowing not to so sin again, and take the earliest opportunity, probably, of repeating the offense, which your superior *man-sense* will define as *feminine*. Well, I wonder if I can stop? Sincerely yours.

Miss L. becomes tired of the "stupid conventions" of life. She concludes that woman is not by nature willing to speak frankly. She closes the letter by expressing a desire to see Mr. N.

MY DEAR MR. N.:

A friend of mine has often made this trenchant remark, that appeals to me at the present moment: "We must enjoy ourselves while we can, for life is short, and when we're dead we're dead a long time." There is at times within the human an intense thirst for joy, and it takes a long time to kill this desire. But life's entanglements to defeat joy are both sad and amusing. And it does, indeed, seem that the individual is entitled to freedom, but that apparently simple thing is the most difficult to attain. And it goes without saying, that women have been restricted in all ways to an absurd degree; but then

there is little use in reiterating this fact. And the prejudices on this subject will, I fancy, be the very last to die. Stupid conventions are so patent, and, alas, people too are so stupid and unthinking, as far as the finer problems of living are concerned, the majority strike one as *hogs*. If there were many large sturdy souls such as Whitman's, of how much silly unnaturalness we should be purged. I admire Whitman's freedom of speech exceedingly; at least it was necessary, I think, for the reason that so much false modesty had been cumulating, making truth on this subject a remote impossibility, and so it was well for strong Walt to cry, "I sing the body electric." Yes, Whitman was one living near to nature.

And so, my *seemingly* guileless friend, you again and again beseech a woman to be "frank," when it is so openly opposed to the nature of the heart. Women don't know how to be frank on anything: so are they made! And when men are too honest with them they take revenge. Well, I am simply to-day revealing the vacuum that exists in my cranium. By the way, is it scholarly exact to speak of a vacuum as existing? It would grieve my soul so to commit a blunder against scholarly etiquette.

Well, do you never journey in this direction? I should enjoy talking with you, and hope to meet you. Sincerely yours.

I'm in an utterly stupid mood.

Miss L. answers N.'s last letter sooner than usual. She closes, again suggesting that N. come and see her. This is the first letter in which flowers are enclosed. Miss L. is becoming much interested in N., and N. is just as much interested in her.

MY DEAR MR. N.:

The only reason that I give for my fiendish promptness is that the time that I receive a letter is the only moment that I feel genuinely in the mood for answering it.

Well, you are amusing! So you persist in trusting women in spite of all my warnings, and so the consequences be on your own head. It really had not occurred to me but what our correspondence would be "confidential" or possibly I should have called to my assistance the oath of confidence of my childhood days, when, with solemn eloquence,

was made the exclamation, "I hope *God* will strike me dead this very minute if I tell!" etc. Now, shall I extract from your God fearing soul an oath of similar nature? But I don't give confidences, and you had not better "trust" me, for I am a *woman*, and a very weary one at that. By no means do I think passion a "weakness"; its non-presence is the weakness. In a dear little book, which I love, George Egerton's "Keynotes"—which, by the way, I wish that you would read—is this sentence: "It is the fashion to decry love; yet the vehemence of the denials, the keenness of the weapons of satire and skepticism that are turned against it only prove its existence. As long as *man is man* and woman is woman it will be to them, at some time, the *sweetest* and possibly the most fatal interest in life to them." I am uncompromising on the subject of freedom, but comparatively few are sufficiently developed to understand the higher conception of freedom, which is too readily confounded with low, unintelligent ideas. And love is a subtle, illusive thing which will not go where it is ordered, but goeth where it listeth and how futile it is to attempt to bind it!

Once again I suggest that you take a trip in this direction. But by all means follow your own sweet will (man-like), and come or not, as you choose. I should be glad to meet you, as I said, and talk with you. Some one has said, "Interesting things are never true," so one is obliged to lie. So don't expect me to be "frank;" never was, and never expect to be. In fact I am a first-class liar. And, after all is said of this little world of ours, I feel—as I was reading in a fine tale of Maarten's this morning—"Up above—far, far above—stood, silent, God's eternal stars, watchful, serenely waiting, in the darkness whence we come and whither we return." Yet, out of the darkness, we emerge for one wee moment, and back again into the impersonal silence, ay for ay it may be.

Well, are you in a worshipping frame of mind this fair Easter morn? Are you thanking the powers that be for the gratuitous gift of identity? Amen! Sincerely yours.

As Miss L. had often emphasized the idea of freedom, N. wrote her a frank and sincere letter, giving his thoughts in regard to freedom. He also ventured to confess his interest in L, and his strong feeling of effection for her. Here is her answer:

MY DEAR MR. N.:

I have just finished reading your letter, and I am amazed at its contents. No doubt, it is my own fault that you have so misunderstood me. If it were not for the fact that possibly I stupidly gave reason for you to misunderstand my letters, I should ignore utterly your last one, but I wish you to understand my meaning (impossible, perhaps). I have also told you several times, in various forms, that I am a woman *who has lived her life*. *Emotion* is a thing of the past for me. I have no enthusiasm for anything. Emotions cannot be got up to order, and I must say you have jarred my feelings in so completely misunderstanding me. I find it difficult to express my exact meaning. There is a wide gulf between a *developed intelligent* freedom and the *unintelligent* giving way to mere *impulse* and *fancy*. I will forgive and forget the whole thing, and shall endeavor to have it affect me in no way.

It is an ideal spring morning; one ought to be happy under the influence of such glorious sunshine. Sincerely yours.

To this last letter N. made a sharp reply. He said also that she had misinterpreted him. Her answer, which follows, was quite unexpected to N. The use of the term "Dearest" was a little puzzling to him.

MY DEAR MR. N.:

I have just finished perusing your letter, in which you are pleased to smile at what you slightly term my "principles," inferring that I have been untrue to them. Not at all! I repeat, I do as I please! You are not my father confessor, so it is not imperative for me to say what I have done.

Let me quote my favorite Omar again, who reflects my present mood:

"Then to the lips of this poor earthen Urn I lean'd, the secret of my life to learn;
And lip to lip it murmured, While you live, drink!—for, once dead,
you never shall return."

Well, are you "annoyed"? But you know, superior masculine, you must not be surprised at anything in a woman.

I should like to see you. I feel a very strong impulse toward you, dearest, and there is sweetness and joy in life at rare moments. Good-bye. Sincerely.

In the last letter L. manifests some feeling towards N. Her letter which follows is not written in such a strain, but is somewhat critical in tone :

MY DEAR MR. N. :

I have been attempting this afternoon to drown consciousness of existence in sleep, but, as the attempt was not successful, I am going to inflict myself upon you. Your love of "*sincerity*" is profound, indeed; and do you expect to find it in this world, and especially in *women*? I suppose that I believe in *sincerity* (in a large sense), but I have not the profound reverence for it that you have. The only thing that I ask of people is to be *interesting* to me: if they are not, I leave them alone. I am not fond of transparent people or those who wear their hearts on their sleeves. But then the human creature is what he is; one has to take the particular individual as he is, and not expect that the ruts and convolutions that habit has produced in his brain are going through some miraculous metamorphosis at his request. 'Tis all an accident, more or less, at any rate, is it not? So, my dear, if I am not "honest," all your desires in that line will be futile. Alas! "I am what I am!"

One of the amusing results of considering marriage as the one exclusive destiny of women is the fact that people, if they see a woman living out of the external institution of marriage, inevitably think it is necessity. Their narrow conceptions cannot imagine that she uses choice in the matter.

But I fancy that I am growing garrulous, as I had no intention this morning of inflicting so much verbiage upon you.

As a rule, men are not sufficiently fastidious and exclusive in their tastes. A thing too easily got is not worth much. But how unsatisfactory letters are; one can say more in half an hour than one can write in a year. Every subject has so many sides that it seems impossible to state one side strongly without denying some other phase of it. And so I should like to see you, too, and have a genuine good talk.

Do you not think that you are slightly literal sometimes in your interpretation of my off-hand remarks?

Now, as to *sincerity*. I have never asked you to trust me, and I have never laid any claim to being sincere with you. In this matter you simply must trust to your own penetration, for I certainly shall not label myself. The verbal explanation of one's personality is to me decidedly stupid, and perfectly unreliable, too. Don't tell me any secrets, or perhaps you will regret it. I promise nothing. I am not one of the "faithful and true" kind.

Ought not people in general to have a more scientific conception of the human organism, that by no means annihilates the finer emotions? But I am going to stop! I must go to my work, and release you, too, from my gabble.

Well, dear, I hope to see you; should enjoy the pleasure exceedingly. Sincerely yours.

Miss L. now for the first time shows in an unmistakable way a serious interest in Mr. N. He had been somewhat indifferent, and had not written as often as usual.

MY DEAR MR. N.:

Why am I writing you again, do you query? Well, how do I know? Simply following a mood, I suppose. Simply a lovely day, divine as a dream. I wish that you were here, dear, just now. I do not understand myself, why my thoughts turn to you, for I did not conceive it possible for my jaded soul to be again aroused into interest. Strange, very strange! You see that I am following your omnipresent suggestion, "be frank." Why? Again, I don't know; a mood, I suppose. Yet I am in one of my desperate moods, when I simply would defy the devil, man, God, and do what I pleased. I feel gloriously free. But again the enigma confronts me—truly an enigma to me, for my interest is not easily aroused—why do I turn to you? I really feel as though I *knew* you, and yet, dear, I *like* you! It is strange, for usually I am as cold as an iceberg. "Frank" again, you see. How do you like it?

Well, dear, why do you not write? I positively feel inspired to-day.

Very sincerely, yours in spirit to-day. But what is spirit?

Although N. was not much in doubt as to L.'s feeling, he nevertheless mentioned in his answer the fact that he was sometimes "puzzled" as to her real meaning. L.'s feeling towards him seems to have ceased, and she closes her following letter in a sarcastic frame of mind.

MY DEAR MR. N. :

It always amuses me a little when a man airs his supposed knowledge of women. Ah, ha, so they are a "puzzle to themselves," are they?

In spite of its absurdity, I made a weary attempt—forced myself—to answer the autocratic catechism that you sent me. Pardon my infliction of feminine moods upon you. I repent in sackcloth and ashes, and hereafter I shall maintain with you the most conventional equilibrium.

With profound reverence for the superior masculine sense and acumen (particularly in its scent of the feminine), I am humbly, but admiringly, yours.

N. did not like the tone of the last letter, and wrote a brief reply, ignoring most of the unpleasant things referred to by L. In her answer which follows, L. shows a strong feeling towards N., and yet seems to regard this feeling in herself as amusing.

MY DEAR BOY :

Your short note is just received, and is it generosity or revenge that impels me to answer at once? You may decide. Well, dear, I have been having a frightful attack of ennui to-day which my force of will has not been able to annihilate. With grim determination I studied all the morning, but the blue devil is still with me—laughing in his sleeve, no doubt, at my futile efforts to dismiss him. How devilishly inadequate books are at times! When one is in certain moods all vitality seems to forsake the literary world. Yes, indeed, there are times, many, when nothing but *life, life*, can satisfy one. Of course, dear, a *genuine friend* is the finest thing in life, but a friend is a rare article—that is, a friend who is so near to you as to be almost a *second self*, yet, at the same time, respects your *individu-*

ality. And there are times, too, when letters and mere words seem but a cold communication between friends.

By the way, may I ask why it is that you always ignore the things that I say to you? You certainly (if circumstantial evidence is worth anything) consider my lengthy epistles a great bore, as you reply so briefly.

My dear boy, I should like to see you very much, indeed, but you are rather slow to embrace the opportunities that I have offered.

Good-bye, dearest: you are a dear, sweet boy. Don't smile. Yours, with —.

Miss L. complains again of not being understood, and again closes her letter in a sarcastic tone.

MY DEAR MR. N. :

You force the fact home to me that my language must be extremely dense, as I have never yet succeeded in making you understand my ideas. Added, however, to my stupid manner of expression is your too literal acceptance of every remark, however n'importe.

When with such accuracy you state my "unworthiness of confidence," kindly recall the fact that I have never asked for your confidence, and certainly you cannot justly accuse me of making any statements as to my honesty, "frankness," etc. As to my being "suspicious," since you have selected such a *gracious* (?) term with which to characterize me, I flatly deny the allegation. However, you are at liberty to think as you please.

But why do I speak of "love" to you? For I can realize how your skeptical soul mocks, and even I myself smile even as I write it. But I am utterly unable to make you understand my ideas and feelings on the sexual question, so I give it up again n'importe.

You like many friends. My nature happens to be such that I *care* but for very few. I know throngs of people of all kinds, but those who *mean anything* to me I can easily count. It is not because I'm "suspicious" (sweet word)—I'm not at all afraid of being hurt: I simply don't care for many I am not attracted to.

When I first began to write you this morning, I confess that I was irritated, your letter was so confoundedly mean; but the irritation has quite worn off and I feel simply amused. Well, do you want to

forgive and make up, dear? But ah, I forget I am that untrustworthy feminine, so "unworthy of confidence." Ah me, how sad! Well, since reading your portrayal of me, all vanity has forsaken my organism; "suspicious" and "untrustworthy," I am in the depths of humiliation. Humbly yours.

In his last letter to Miss L., N. told her that he had grown to think a great deal of her, notwithstanding their frequent disagreements. He intimated that in a previous letter he had expressed strong feeling for her, but that she took no notice of it. She answers:

MY DEAR MR. N.:

It is a lovely afternoon—just the kind for a long drive in the country, away from the haunts of mankind, etc. But the aforesaid conditions for their joy depend decidedly upon congenial companionship—what say you?—at least in certain moods. Nature devoid of the human element does not appeal to me.

You say that I am "informal." Well, the majority of people would not agree with you in that verdict, for I am generally denominated *cold* and *formal*.

And so, dear, you have been "emotional" in your letters to me. How very obtuse I must be, for I have not noticed any traces of emotion therein. It has been rather a mild, adulterated sort of emotion, hasn't it?

I now expect to be in this locality most of the summer, and, if so, of course I shall be glad to see you in —. Yes, my dear, I should like to see you very much.

I think that you may well term "love" a "puzzler:" but there is one thing true of it—that it vindicates itself, for, though of everything else in the universe, in certain moods, at any rate, we ask the why and wherefore, often the disgusted reply being, "No good," we are only too glad to revel in emotion without questioning it. It may be absurdity, madness, what not, yet we welcome it.

Well, dear boy, good-bye. Hoping to see you soon. I am, sincerely.

My brain is weary.

L. and N. had not seen each other since the time she was beginning her college course. N. finally called on L., remaining two days in the city where she resided. They both were much interested as to how they would impress each other. When they first met, L. became sarcastic. N. perceived that it was a habit of hers which was more of a whim than anything else. While out on a walk, however, L. drifted into one of her critical moods. They sat under the trees and talked, but the conversation soon became sharp, and so high was the feeling that L. exclaimed: "Well, we never can agree; we are absolutely different: you don't understand me at all, and we might just as well part here." N. hardly knew what to say or do; but, it being near the dinner hour, he suggested that before they leave each other he should like very much if L. would consent to dine out with him. L. hesitated some, but accepted. While they were sitting at the table engaged in general conversation, L. began to express some feeling, and asked N. if he would forgive the remark she had made about their parting. N. almost broke out in tears, but he composed himself sufficiently to answer in the affirmative. His formal answer was no indication of his feeling. From that moment they both knew that they cared a great deal for each other. N. remained another day; they did not wish to part: they did not care whether they agreed or not; the disagreement was an intellectual matter only. Their feeling now became explicit; they fully understood each other; they were in love. What a change! It was but forty-eight hours ago that it would have been easy for them to part; but now how difficult! N. could not wait till he arrived at his home, but wrote L. two letters on the train, which were full of feeling for her. He wanted to come and see her again soon. She more than reciprocated in her answer:

MY DEAR DEAREST.:

Your two sweet letters I received this morning, just after I had mailed one to you. Indeed, dear, I am so glad to hear from you, and *think* of you—well, I shall not attempt to compute how many times. Yes, I think it is very sweet to think that one is really *near* in *feeling* to another, for it is a *rare* experience, at least with me. Why, dear, as I wrote you, I feel that no one understands me as you do. Of course, my dear boy, I want to see you, nor do I want the “civilized co-degenerate world,” as you term it, to enjoy that pleasure with me. No, dear, I only want *you*. (I suspect that I am writing in rather an incoherent fashion, and repeating myself.) So, dear, I for my part cannot see you any too soon, for I have been with you in thought, and so, dearest, I shall be so glad to see you: it is so restful and sweet being with you, and a joy that explains itself. I certainly never expected to know any one as I think I do you, nor to feel with any one the satisfied repose that I felt with you. (I am in one of my frank moods rare), but why shouldn't I tell you?

Words fail to give an idea of the heat to-day: it is simply overpowering.

Well, dear, dear boy, I hope to see you soon. Good-bye, dear.

While it is evident that “L.” is deeply in love with N., yet in her next letter she does not manifest intense feeling, but criticises N.: for although he had written often, it was not so often as she expected. In this letter, as in others, L. blames herself, and also N. But when in this frame of mind she draws a great deal from her imagination.

DEAR, I had hoped for a letter ere this, but I certainly have no intention of begging any more for what a man wishes to withhold. Well, I shall soon follow your example and drop into silence, for don't imagine that I'm going to keep on boring you with letters.

If I could see you, there are some things that I would like to say to you this morning (provided I could secure your attention, a thing I found difficult), but I'll not write them, as it is so difficult to be *understood* in letters.

If I had a bit of sentiment in me this morning (but I haven't) I suppose that I should recall the fact (or is it merely a dream?) that I

was *with* you last Sunday, just a week ago ; but then to ask you to recall it would be taxing the masculine memory far too severely. I'll not be so cruel !

Well, we are as we are, and to ask a man to dance on the heights of emotion very long would, indeed, be craving for miracles. How effectually *space* and *distance* annihilate *masculine feeling* ! 'Tis the *immediate* that he eagerly grasps. But then one simply must accept the inevitable. And in the labyrinthine maze of words, words, in which we are entangled, now and then a *fact* peeps out : and one now stares me in the face ; 'tis this—the *ease* with which a man *forgets*. In spite of what we *know*, women go on permitting themselves to be the *sport* of the masculine. How ridiculous the feminine is ! Is its sole *raison-d'être* the *amusement* of the masculine in his moments of relaxation ? Well, if she consents to the position (idiot that she is), who can she blame ? One must accept his own idiocy, that is all.

Again my imagination summons up a picture of you. Ah, the surpassing glory of being a man ! But I must draw down a veil on the entrancing picture, for it fills my weak feminine soul with envy. Good-bye, dear.

There is no man who does not like to be loved. N. did not desire to lead L. to expect anything more than love in return for her love. It is probable that L. never expected anything more ; in fact, she had said once to N. that she never wished him to feel that he lost any freedom on her account. There were no doubts in either of their minds of the genuineness of their mutual love. N. had no doubt in his mind but that he could live happily with L. But conditions in life would not allow of his proposing marriage, however much he might desire to. In all her future letters, L. never lost her love feeling. N. did not write to her as often as he should, but it was not because he did not love her ; it was a case of man's general disinclination to write many letters. L. wrote once or twice every day to N. N. was engaged in a business that required almost all of his

time. L., on the other hand, had much leisure time. That he did not write to her so often was not what displeased her, but it was her false interpretation of his silence, to wit, that he had forgotten her.

The reader will have noted the critical tendency in L.'s character, which is bound to manifest itself even in the most intense love feeling. There is much repetition in her letters, as she herself often confesses. She seems to like to love for the sake of love itself; she had no ulterior object, not even marriage; she loved to love: that was bliss itself.

In the letters that follow, one will note how pure and simple is the expression of love. L. writes briefly, and shows little desire for argumentation. Such is the power of love to overcome everything.

Well, dearest, it is about 7 P. M., and I am alone in my room. How much I have thought of you to-day, and it would be so lovely, dear, to see you.

I wonder what you have been doing these two days. It seems to me that life has a way of now and then (very rarely, however) of introducing joyous moments, possibly just to show us what she can do in this line. Will you forgive me, dear, if I quote a little poetry of Browning's?

“ Ah, Love, but a day,
And the world has changed !
The sun's away,
And the bird estranged ;
The wind has dropped,
And the sky's deranged ;
Summer has stopped.

“ Look in my eyes !
Wilt thou change, too ?
Should I fear surprise ?
Shall I find aught new
In the old and dear,
In the good and true,
With the changing year ? ”

When you say that you do not enjoy art, I suppose that I'm rather insolent to thrust it upon you. But I think that all the forms of art add to the *joy* of living, and "*knowledge*" put into a beautiful form has had nothing taken away from it.

Again, dear, I wonder what you are going to do this evening. It is just two days since ——

Ah, dear, I feel very much alone, but I can only *say* good-night, and *think* of you, dearest.

This letter was written on the same day as the previous one :

MY DEAR BOY :

Your note is just received, and it was very sweet of you to send me a few words. Yes, my dear, I think it is "lovely" that we have "met." I know that I, too, shall be "lonely" now that I'm rested. Already I have felt it, although I was so weary yesterday that nothing made a very lively impression upon me. Ah, my dear, I wish that I could see you! If I should go on writing this morning, it would simply be repetition, so good-bye, dear.

Dear, I shall probably read your note many times to-day, and try and imagine that I am with you. How sweet that would be!

MY DEAR :

I wrote you yesterday, and again last evening ; had the latter letter ready for the mail when your notes of —— arrived this morning, so I enclose last night's epistle. (Unkind, am I not, to bore you with so much?)

I feel, dear, that you know and understand me better than any one on earth. I mean exactly what I say! But why multiply words, for I am sure, dear, that you understand all that I would say. Good-bye, dear.

DEAREST: I don't want to flood you with letters, but it seems as though I must write you a few words. How lonely I am, dear. Again and again I have read your notes. Well, words fail to give adequate ideas of these feelings. Surely your little sojourn was nearly perfect, and it is sweet to think of. And, my dear, I am so

glad to know you as I do, and to feel towards you, too, as I do : what that feeling is I am sure you know. Positively, dear, it is the sweetest time that I have ever enjoyed : in fact, it is quite unique. Ah me, you know, without my saying it, how much it has been to me !

Ah, my dear boy, how I should like to see you, so lonely am I ! Do you get weary of my saying the same thing so many times ? But what else can I say, dear, for I have been thinking of you all day, and to-night thought is intensified into a yearning for *you—only you*. Well, good-night, dear one.

Well, dear, I have not heard from you since the 3rd, and it seems a *very* long time.

Now that I have begun to write, I haven't a thing to say, save that I miss you and am lonely without you, and, seeing that I have already made this same remark at least a dozen times, possibly it is by this time impressed upon your brain. Sometimes, dearest, words are very ineffective things.

I hope that you will *feel* like writing, dear, for I want a word from you, oh, how much. (I find myself returning to primitive expressions.)

I'm not in the mood for writing. It is a cold medium of expression to me just at this moment. Good-bye, dear.

Again, I hope that you will *feel* like writing *at once*.

My dear, I have *never* before felt such loneliness, but what's the use of repeating this for the hundredth time ?

You see, dear, that I am developing into a regular letter fiend. Yesterday I wrote twice, and here I am again. But one is likely to write when one is *thinking* so much. Why, dear, what shall I say to you to give you an idea of the sweetness you have brought into my life ? It is no one thing in our relation that I would accentuate. It is the whole—congeniality in so much. (Words are hackneyed.) Again, dear, I ask forgiveness, for I want to quote something that your "degenerative world" called to mind, that is the voicing of the same idea by art :

" Ah, love, *let us be true to one another!* for the *world*, which seems

To lie before us like a land of dreams,

So various, so beautiful, so new,

Hath, really, neither joy, nor love, nor light,

Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain :

And we are here as on a darkling plain,

Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,

Where ignorant armies clash by night."

Shall I soon see you, dearest? Good-bye.

In the following letter L.'s critical tendency is manifested. She also resolves not to give expression to her feelings any more, because N. does not respond as he should. She breaks this resolution.

Dear, is *everything* with you, then, a "*means to an end*"? Just answer this question, please, for a change, for, with fine consistency, you ignore everything that I write. Do you know that henceforth I'm going to follow your *example* and be very *moderate* and *mild* in my expressions? I will not bore you any more with my *intense* phraseology.

Well, I do not feel very much interested in anything at this moment, so I will say good-bye.

I am glad that you are enjoying yourself, playing the society act, etc. How charming, to be sure! Just now I (see the changes) would like to say something sweet and nice to you, but I won't, because—yes, I will, too (break my resolution before it's cold).

I should like to — you, dearest. Just come to my arms, dear. Ah, could I? I *think* of you, yes, yes, indeed! In fact, I — you! Good-bye again, dear.

Miss L. is again sarcastic, and makes a resolution not to express her feelings any more. She signs the letter with her full name, which she has not done except in her first letters.

It is a fine morning, dear: is this not startling news? I fear I'm

not very *loyal* to the *sex*, for I'm not very fond of women. They possess many traits that are decidedly unpleasant to me. (Don't imagine that I except myself from the condemnation.) I feel this morning a superabundant amount of energy. I feel as though I could jump over the sun, but, alas, great would be the fall thereof!

8.30 A. M. Your letter of the 28th inst. received, and I see that you are improving the circumstances into which you are so fortunately thrown. Religion, prayers, and songs (the latter reinforced by the charm of the feminine), how fine, to be sure. As for religion, I feel that Renan exhausted the subject, but, of course, comparatively few know Renan; certainly not the theologians. How prejudiced you are sometimes in your criticisms! And you at times fancy, I imagine, that you will simply silence me with the brute force of assertion. Do you think that you possess some peculiar prerogative by which you can grandly (dogmatically I should call it) waive aside every statement made by others as mere "opinion"? Art is a part of the universe, and it needs both "attention" and "investigation" to understand it. The artist is much more fair; he does not assail science. Why, in fact, should either one of them attack the other? However, I'm quite aware that I'm wasting my breath in saying these things to you. I am familiar with the majesty with which you will sweep them aside as though I were a silly ignoramus.

Do you think, too, that my sole mission in life is to be "antidotal" to your various moods? When you are tired of the worshipping state of mind, the hymns, etc., then you fancy, possibly, that I might be a momentary "antidote." No, I thank you, the position is too lofty for me.

I feel hard as a rock: the very idea or thought of sentiment wearies me; it *never* shall disturb me again. As things are constituted, it is most foolish for a woman to give up to this sort of thing. If life were differently organized, then it might be different. There is no getting around that. It is like a man—like any one, I suppose—to want to enjoy things without undergoing the responsibilities that convention has imposed for their enjoyment. Well, I have learned the lesson once and for all. I *abandon* henceforth the field of sentiment. I shall never again play the part of plaything. I have thought for a long time that *woman* and *fool* were synonymous terms, and my own experience confirms the opinion. I have played the part of a first-

class idiot. It makes me smile at this moment at my own puerile faith, that I could think that a man really *cared* for me. I think a man would have a more serious task than he would care to undertake in convincing me of that again. Bah, it's all a farce!

Well, I will leave you to your sainthood and your hymns, good "deacon"! Sincerely yours.

This last letter hurt N.'s feelings, and he confessed the same to "L." in a brief but kind note. Her answer is an illustration of the changeableness of woman's emotions.

MY DEAREST BOY:

I have been repenting my brutal letter to you. Will you forgive me, dear?

Two of your dear letters came to me to-day, and, ah me, I wonder how I could have been so hateful!

Would you let me take you in my arms now, dearest, and love you to my heart's content, or have I forfeited that delight?

I want to send this note in this mail; will write more fully soon.

Dear, forgive me and just come to my arms, for, dearest, I — you. Good-bye.

The gradual development of love in L. is partially hidden. She was at first interested in N.; this interest grew; at times she seemed to be playing with the word "dear;" she did not seem to know her own mind, as she said she did not even read her letters over before sending them; she wrote things down just as they came into her mind.

When L. and N. met, there was a contest between their personalities. As she had always been allowed to have her own way by her parents, she was very sensitive to the least suggestion of any one having power over her. She misinterpreted many statements in N.'s letters, as if he were trying to control her. Such an idea was contrary to all her previous thinking. But there was really no such purpose on the part of N.; he understood her, he always let her

have her own way. When she met him, and found that his supposed dogmatism did not exist, that he was willing to do just as she liked, that he recognized her equality and independence, all her opposition ceased. Where there is this true love, both persons long to serve each other; they cannot do too much, one for the other. When we think of L's assertion of independence and her fear of being subservient to any one, we realize the infinitude of the power of love.

One great difficulty with Miss L., which is often the case with both men and women students, was her failure to adhere a sufficiently long time to her chosen specialty. If a student is ambitious to be one of the foremost in any branch of knowledge, he may not be able to accomplish it by close application in three or five years, but he can do it in ten years. For any one with average ability, by continually keeping at a definite line of work, gradually and unconsciously becomes possessor of most that is known in this line, and this fact gives him recognition as an authority. The difficulty is that students have not sufficient perseverance and *patience* to make the sacrifices that such a method of study requires.

